Denmark Vesey-black Charleston, SC 1822

John Brown- led the Pottawatomie massacre of 1856 & raided Harper's Ferry, West Virginia in 1859

Gabriel- led a rebellion in Virginia in 1800

Stono Rebellion- 1739 in South Carolina

Nat Turner was born on October 2nd, 1800 in Southampton, Virginia. As a child, he was very religious. He prayed and fasted and often had visions that he thought were messages from God. Nat’s first vision came when he was 21, and he had just run away. His vision was of an angel telling him to return to his master, so he did. A year later Samuel Turner died and Nat was sold to Thomas Moore. Three years later, while working in the fields, Nat received his second vision. It was God telling him “the great day of judgment was at hand”. As time went on, Nat became more and more convinced that God chosen him for some greater purpose. In May 1828, while he was working in his master’s fields, he had another powerful vision in which he believed a follower of God appeared to him and told him “…Christ had laid down the yoke he had borne for the sins of men, and that I should take it on and fight against the Serpent…”. Not certain exactly what he was supposed to do, Nat waited for another sign from God. At the beginning of the year 1830, Nat was moved to the home of Joseph Travis. On February 12th, 1830, there was an eclipse of the sun. Nat took this to be the sign he had been waiting for and began recruiting fellow slaves and made preparations for his rebellion against the slave owners of Virginia. They decided to hold their revolt on the 4th of July, but Nat became ill so they had to postpone their plans. Not wanting the sound of guns to alert people of the revolt, the slaves armed themselves with knives, axes, hatchets, and other tools. On August 13th, something in the atmosphere caused the sun to appear a bluish green color. Nat took this as his sign to begin, and told his people to be ready. A week later, August 21st, 1831, Nat Turner’s Rebellion began. At 2 o’clock in the morning, Nat told the rebels “kill all the white people.” The first victims were the Travis family, asleep in their beds. It is believed that between 40 and 70 blacks, free and slave, went from house to house, freeing the slaves and killing the masters. By noon of the next day, Nat decided to lead his force to Jerusalem, the nearest town. By then the word of the rebellion had gotten out to whites. Militia and sailors from ships anchored in Norfolk, Virginia, arrived to help stop the rebellion. When confronted by the militia with muskets, the rebels scattered, and Nat’s force became disorganized. The militia soon caught up with the remnants of Turner’s force. More were killed or captured, but a few escaped. In the end the rebels had stabbed, shot, and clubbed at least 60 people to death. Within 48 hours Nat Turner’s rebellion was over. Over the next few days, close to 200 blacks were killed by white mobs, more than had actually participated in the attacks. Meanwhile, Nat Turner had escaped the retaliation. For over 2 months, he hid in several different places in the swamps around the Travis farm, but on October 30th, he was finally captured and locked in the county jail. On November 5th, Nat was tried and found guilty. He was hanged and then skinned on November 11th. I don’t think that Nat Turner’s rebellion was worth the costs because in the end more black people were murdered than whites and then more laws were created to restrict the lifestyle of blacks. My topic relates to the theme of expansion because Nat Turner’s rebellion expanded the idea of abolishing slavery. After Nat’s rebellion, the state legislature of Virginia considered abolishing slavery, but in a close vote decided to keep it, and to support a repressive policy against black people, slave and free. It also expanded the idea to make more laws against black people to stop them from rebelling. One of the laws Virginia made, banned blacks, whether slave or free, from practicing religion without their white families because of how so much of Nat’s plan had to do with God.